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Muramatsu et al.

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(54) **AUDIO PROCESSING DEVICE, AUDIO
PROCESSING METHOD, AND PROGRAM**

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382/194

See application file for complete search history.

(75) Inventors: **Tomoaki Muramatsu**, Chiba (JP);
Nobuhiko Nakamura, Kanagawa (JP);
Yoshio Oguchi, Chiba (JP); **Masanobu**
Sayama, Chiba (JP)

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H04S 3/00 (2006.01)
H04N 5/64 (2006.01)
H04N 13/04 (2006.01)

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H04S 2400/11 (2013.01)

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1/002

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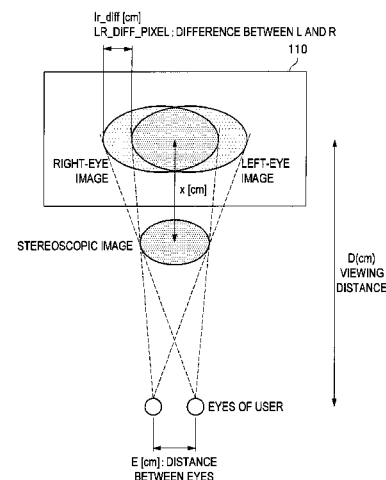
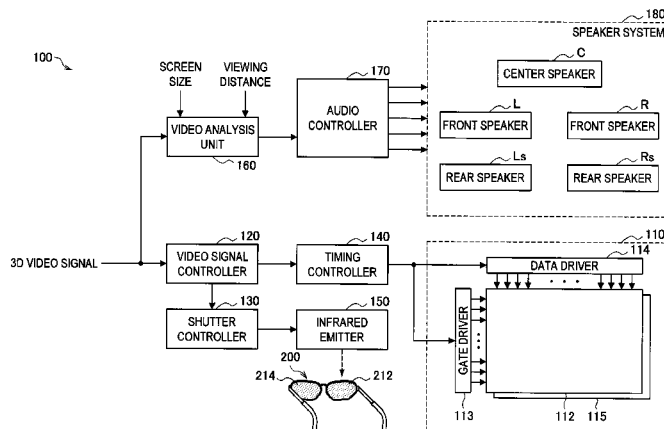
Primary Examiner — Xu Mei

(74) Attorney, Agent, or Firm — Hazuki International, LLC

(57) **ABSTRACT**

There is provided an audio processing device including an estimation unit configured to estimate a user's representative perceived position of a stereoscopic image from a difference between a left-eye image and a right-eye image of the stereoscopic image displayed on a display device, and an audio controller configured to control audio output of an audio output device in accordance with the representative perceived position estimated by the estimation unit.

20 Claims, 10 Drawing Sheets



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FIG. 1

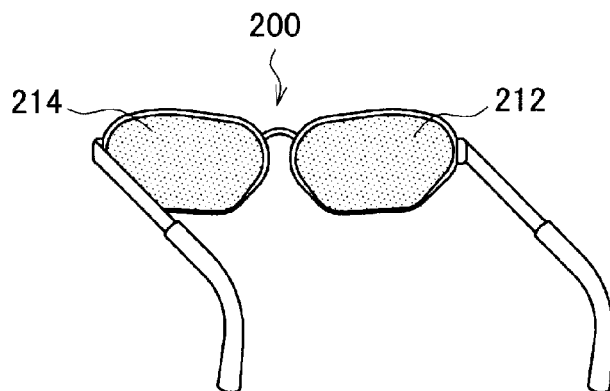
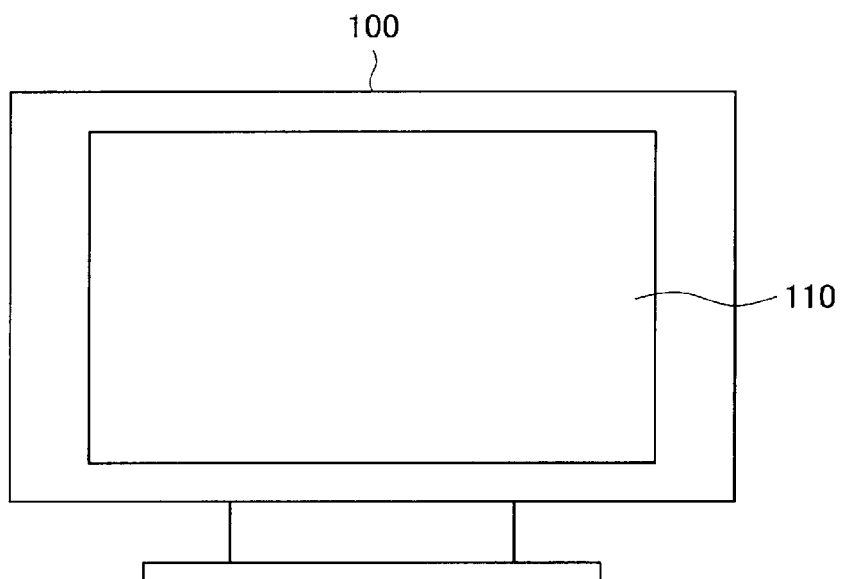


FIG. 2

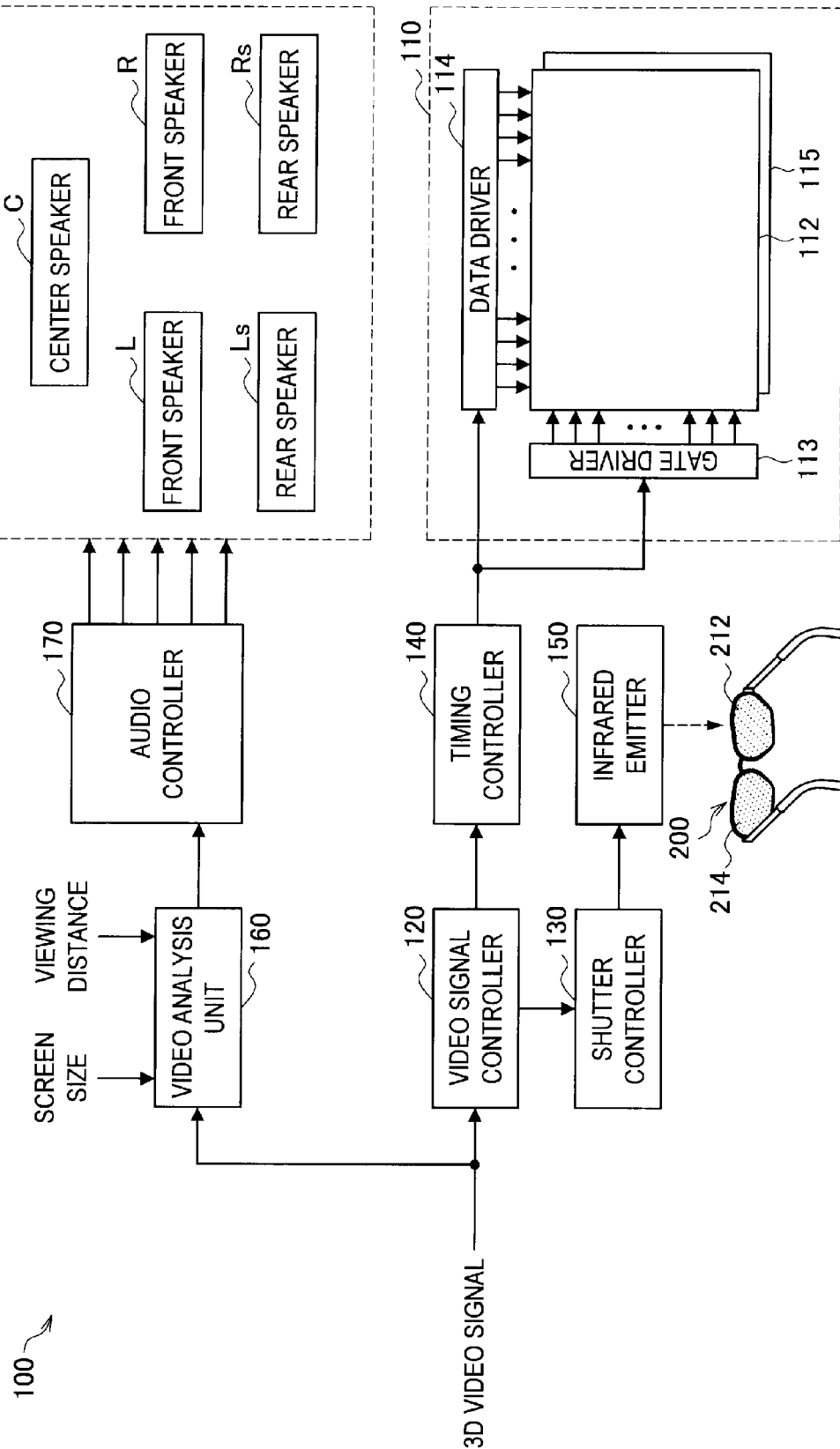


FIG. 3

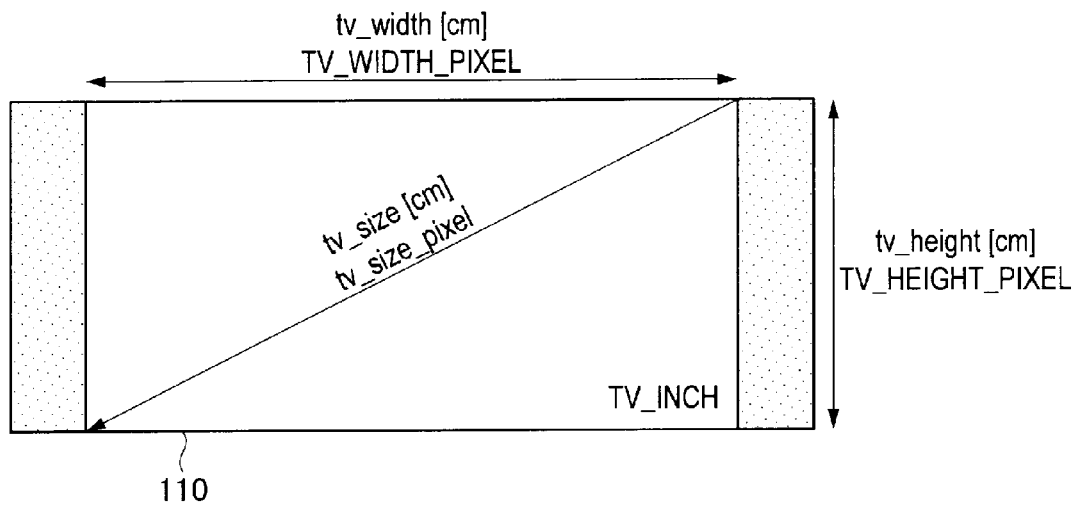


FIG. 4

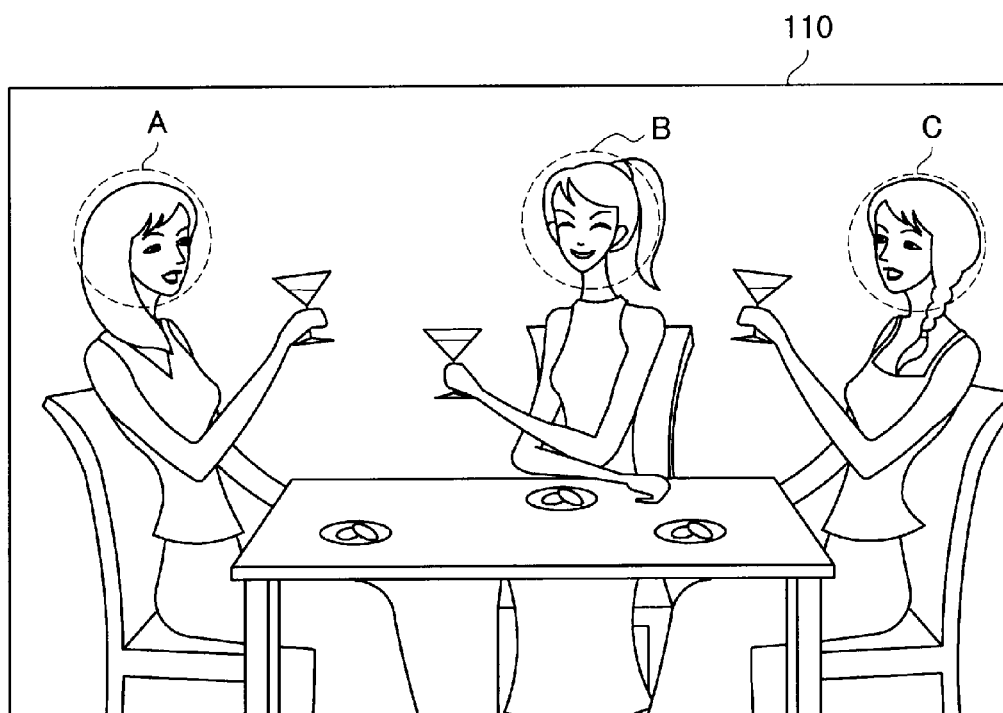


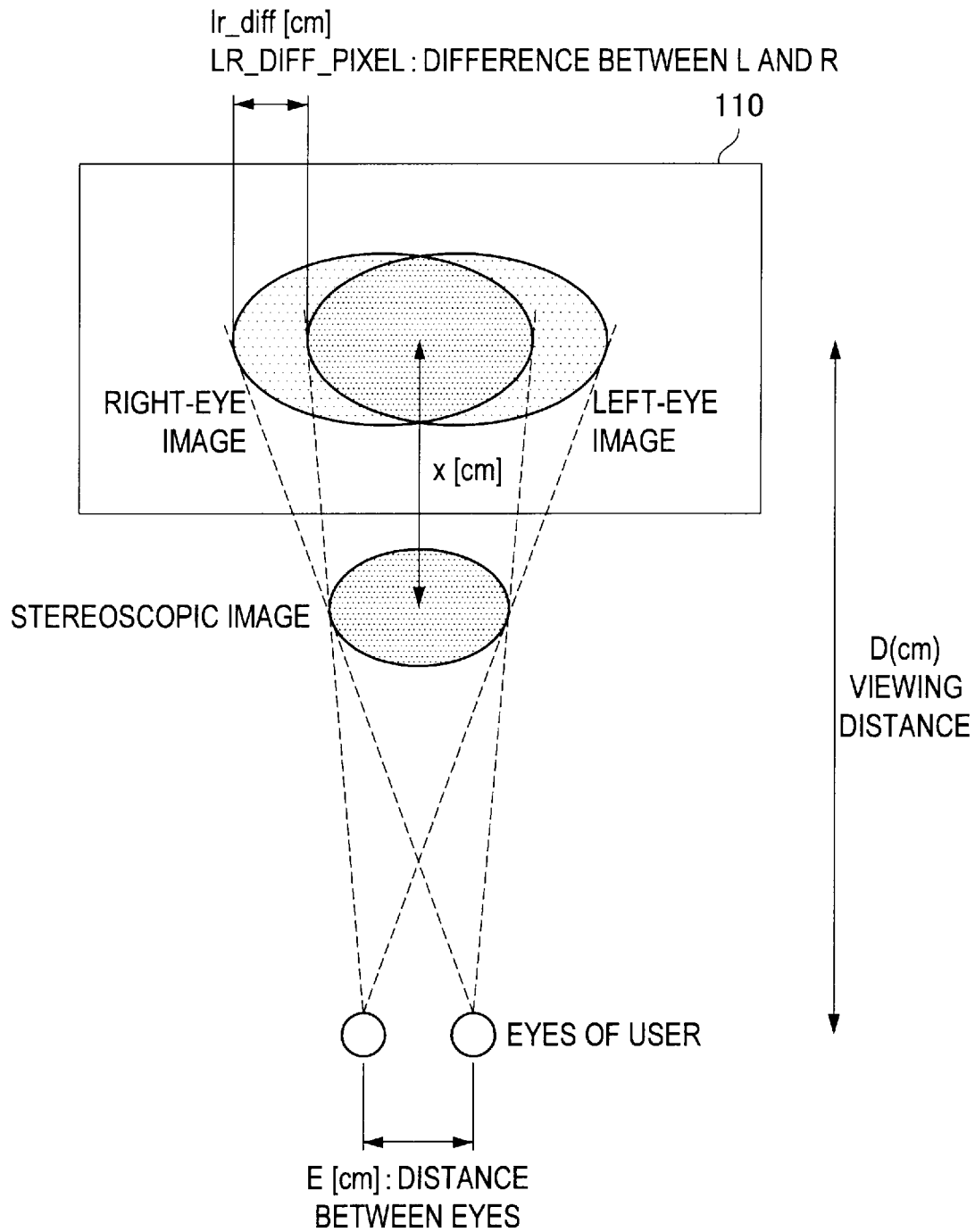
FIG. 5

FIG. 6

110



area 0	area 1	...			
area 6	...				
...					
					area N

FIG. 7

x0	4cm
x1	4cm
x2	40cm
x3	48cm
x4	50cm
x5	30cm
x6	21cm
x7	23cm
x8	20cm
x9	25cm

FIG. 8

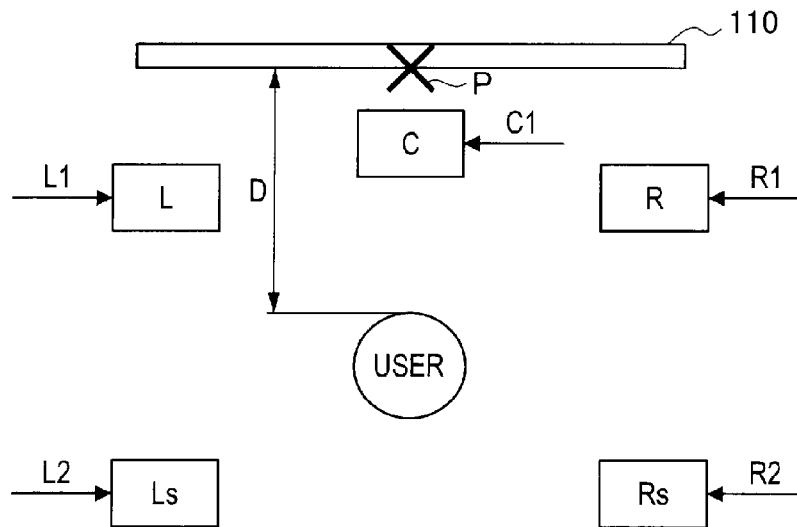


FIG. 9

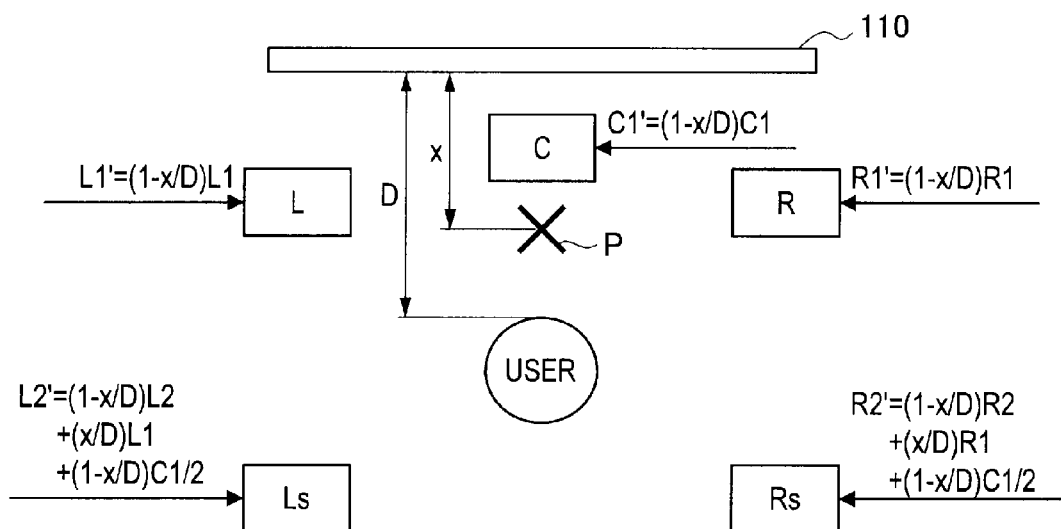


FIG. 10

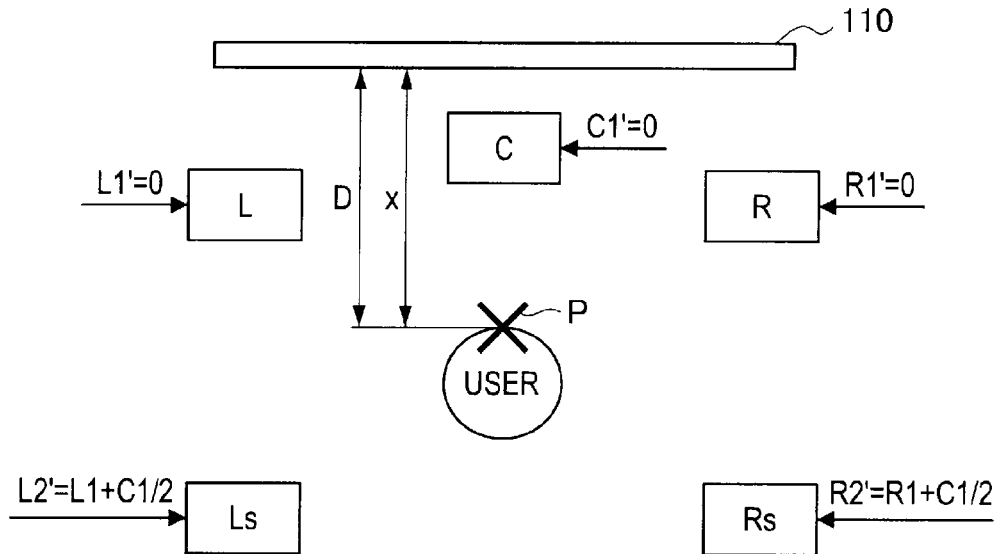


FIG. 11

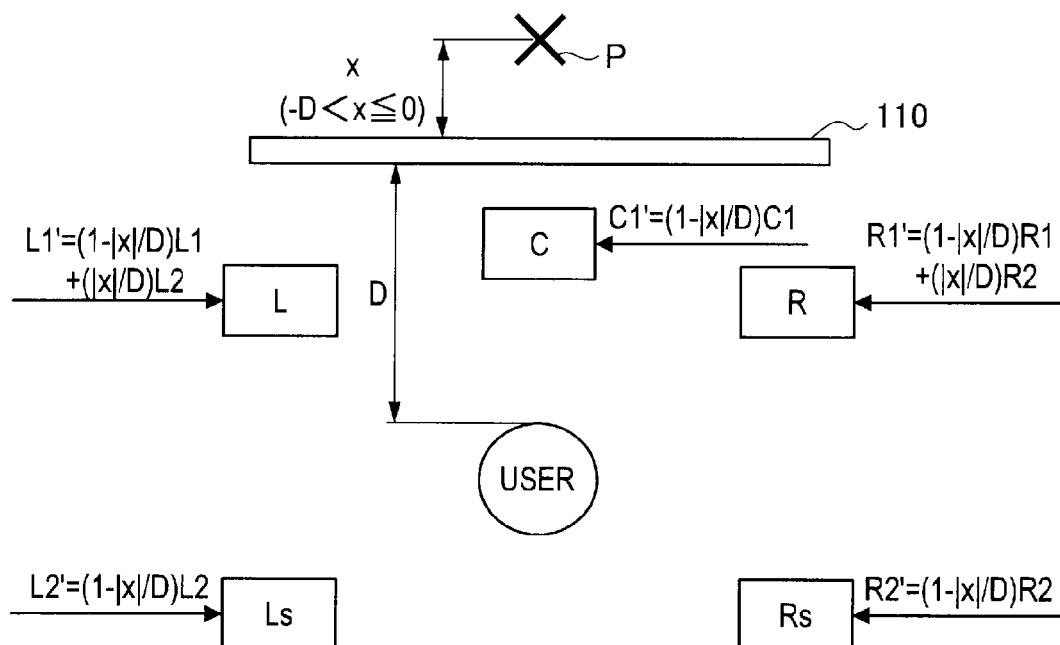


FIG. 12

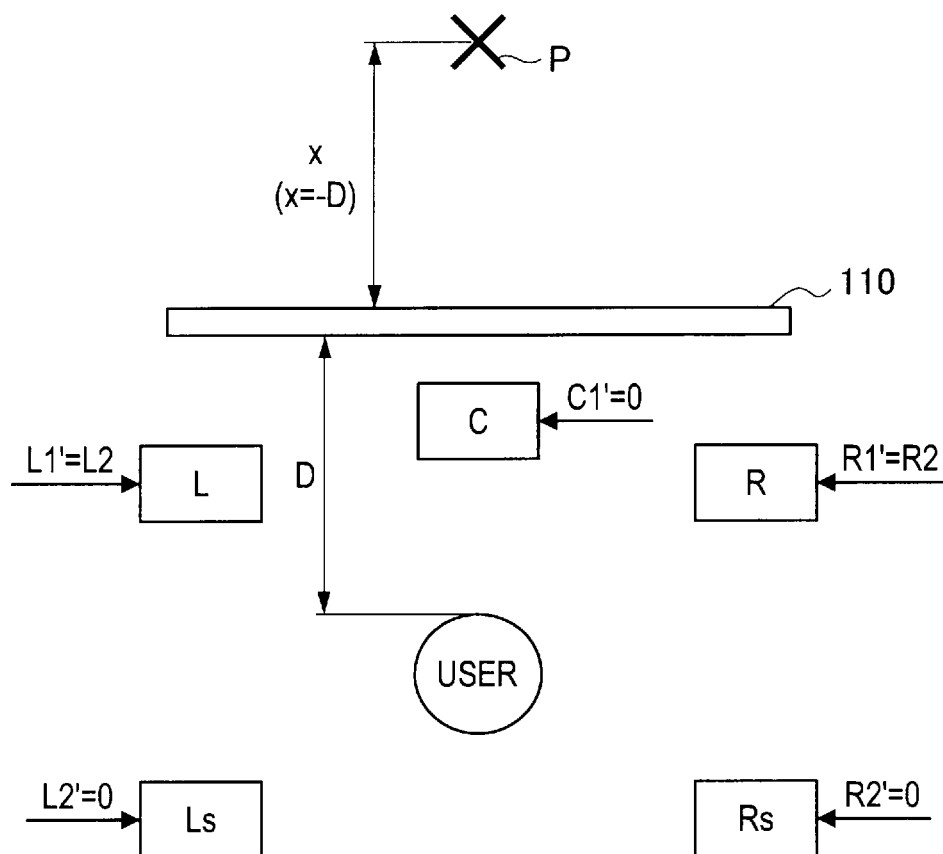


FIG. 13

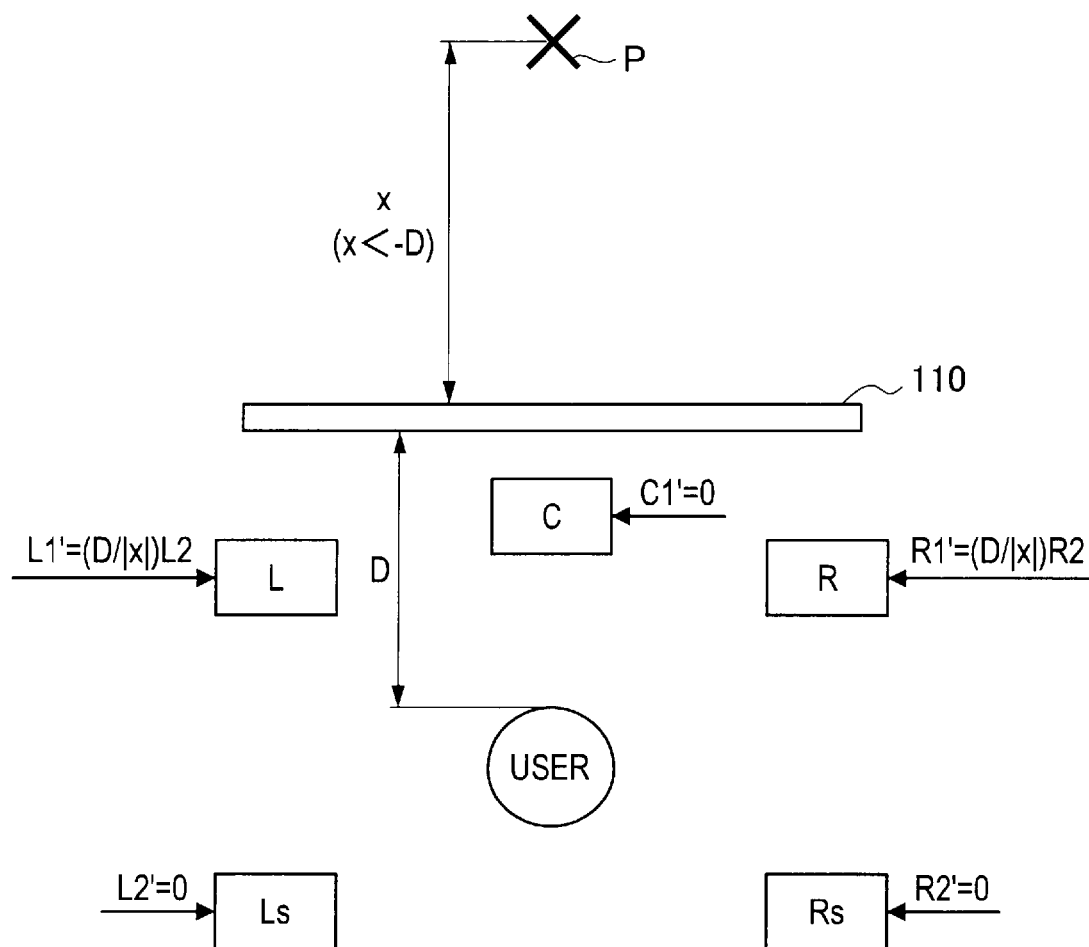
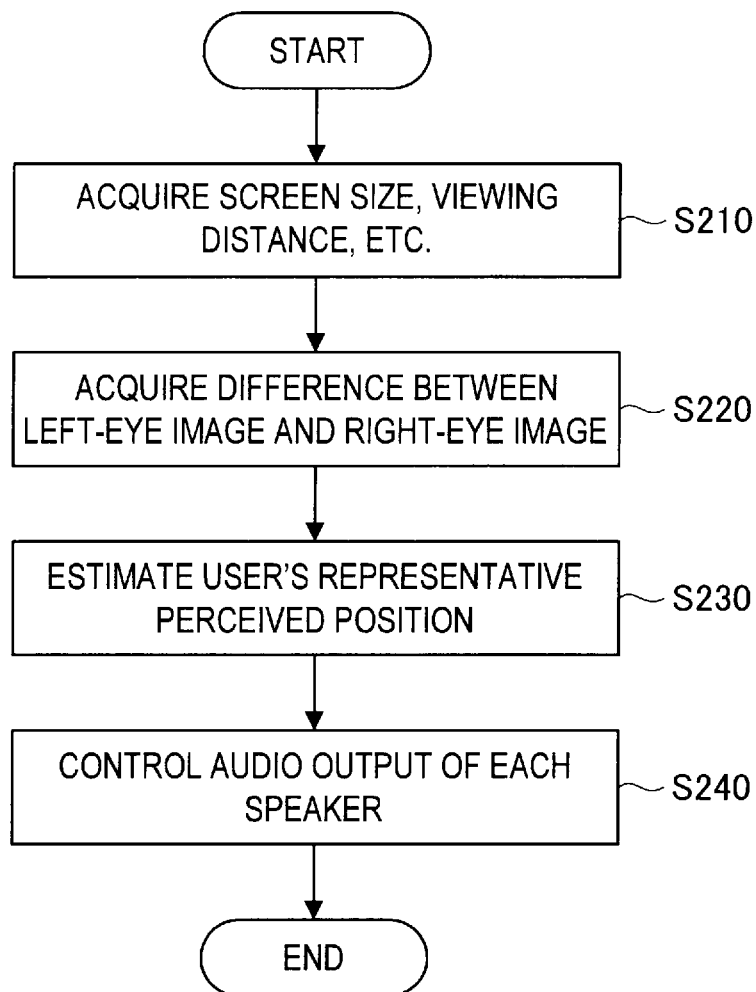


FIG. 14

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**AUDIO PROCESSING DEVICE, AUDIO
PROCESSING METHOD, AND PROGRAM****CROSS REFERENCE TO RELATED
APPLICATION**

This application claims the priority benefit of Japanese Patent Application No. JP 2010-149365, filed Jun. 30, 2010, the entire contents of which is hereby incorporated by reference.

BACKGROUND

The present disclosure relates to an audio processing device, an audio processing method, and a program.

Nowadays, 3D display devices, which are capable of allowing a user to perceive a stereoscopic image by displaying an image for the left eye and an image for the right eye, are circulated. It is expected that the 3D display devices will become more widespread in the future because television contents and movies that are produced for 3D viewing are increasing and also because researches are actively conducted on the technologies for converting a 2D image into a 3D image. JP 2004-38933A is a document that discloses a 3D display device.

Meanwhile, for audio, there exists a multi-channel system like 5.1 ch. With this system, it is possible to provide a user with a realistic sound field by controlling each of a plurality of speakers such as right and left front speakers, right and left rear speakers, and a center speaker to output audio that has been generated for the individual speaker.

SUMMARY

However, when a 2D image is converted into a 3D image, it is concerned that the linkage between audio for the 2D image and the 3D image after the conversion may be impaired. Further, although audio for a 3D image is typically produced by taking a 3D image into consideration, it has been difficult with the conventional 3D display devices to more emphasize the linkage between a 3D image and audio for the 3D image.

In light of the foregoing, it is desirable to provide a novel and improved audio processing device, audio processing method, and program that are capable of more emphasizing the linkage between a stereoscopic image and audio.

According to an embodiment of the present disclosure, there is provided an audio processing device including an estimation unit configured to estimate a user's representative perceived position of a stereoscopic image from a difference between a left-eye image and a right-eye image of the stereoscopic image displayed on a display device, and an audio controller configured to control audio output of an audio output device in accordance with the representative perceived position estimated by the estimation unit.

The audio output device may include a front audio output device and a rear audio output device, the rear audio output device being arranged at a position that is farther from the display device than is the front audio output device, and the audio controller may control audio output of the front audio output device and the rear audio output device in accordance with a distance between the representative perceived position and a reference plane.

The audio controller may, when the representative perceived position coincides with the reference plane, supply a first audio signal to the front audio output device, and supply a second audio signal to the rear audio output device.

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The audio controller may, when the representative perceived position is closer to the user than is the reference plane, supply the first audio signal to the front audio output device and the rear audio output device at a ratio in accordance with a distance between the representative perceived position and the reference plane.

The audio controller may, as the distance between the representative perceived position and the reference plane is longer, supply the first audio signal to the rear audio output device at a higher rate.

The audio controller may, as the distance between the representative perceived position and the reference plane is longer, reduce the second audio signal supplied to the rear audio output device.

The audio controller may, when the reference plane is closer to the user than is the representative perceived position, supply the second audio signal to the front audio output device and the rear audio output device at a ratio in accordance with the distance between the representative perceived position and the reference plane.

The audio controller may, as the distance between the representative perceived position and the reference plane is longer, supply the second audio signal to the front audio output device at a higher rate.

The audio controller may, as the distance between the representative perceived position and the reference plane is longer, reduce the first audio signal supplied to the front audio output device.

The estimation unit may estimate a user's perceived position(s) of one or more image objects included in the left-eye image and the right-eye image, and estimate the representative perceived position on the basis of the perceived position(s) of the one or more image objects.

The estimation unit may estimate as the representative perceived position one of the perceived positions of the image objects.

The estimation unit may estimate as the representative perceived position a mean value of the perceived positions of the image objects.

The estimation unit may estimate user's perceived positions of a plurality of regions that are obtained by dividing the left-eye image and the right-eye image, and estimate the representative perceived position on the basis of a distribution of the perceived positions of the plurality of regions.

According to another embodiment of the present disclosure, there is provided an audio processing method including estimating a user's representative perceived position of a stereoscopic image from a difference between a left-eye image and a right-eye image of the stereoscopic image displayed on a display device, and controlling audio output of an audio output device in accordance with the representative perceived position.

According to still another embodiment of the present disclosure, there is provided a program for causing a computer to function as an estimation unit configured to estimate a user's representative perceived position of a stereoscopic image from a difference between a left-eye image and a right-eye image of the stereoscopic image displayed on a display device, and an audio controller configured to control audio output of an audio output device in accordance with the representative perceived position estimated by the estimation unit.

According to the embodiments of the present disclosure described above, the linkage between a stereoscopic image and audio can be emphasized more.

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE DRAWINGS

FIG. 1 is an explanatory diagram showing the appearance of a display device in accordance with an embodiment of the present disclosure;

FIG. 2 is a functional block diagram showing the configuration of a display device in accordance with an embodiment of the present disclosure;

FIG. 3 is a diagram illustrating the size lettering of an image display unit;

FIG. 4 is an explanatory diagram showing exemplary detection of an image object;

FIG. 5 is an explanatory diagram showing the relationship between the position at which image objects, which are included in a left-eye image and a right-eye image, are displayed and the position at which a stereoscopic image is perceived;

FIG. 6 is an explanatory diagram showing an example of image division;

FIG. 7 is an explanatory diagram showing a specific example of the distance x_m of each area;

FIG. 8 is an explanatory diagram showing audio control performed by an audio controller when the user's perceived position P of a stereoscopic image coincides with the image display unit;

FIG. 9 is an explanatory diagram showing audio control performed by the audio controller when the user's perceived position P of a stereoscopic image is closer to the user than is the image display unit;

FIG. 10 is an explanatory diagram showing audio control performed by the audio controller when the user's perceived position P of a stereoscopic image is closer to the user than is the image display unit;

FIG. 11 is an explanatory diagram showing audio control performed by the audio controller when the image display unit is closer to the user than is the user's perceived position P of a stereoscopic image;

FIG. 12 is an explanatory diagram showing audio control performed by the audio controller when the image display unit is closer to the user than is the user's perceived position P of a stereoscopic image;

FIG. 13 is an explanatory diagram showing audio control performed by the audio controller when the image display unit is closer to the user than is the user's perceived position P of a stereoscopic image; and

FIG. 14 is a flowchart showing the operation of a display device in accordance with an embodiment of the present disclosure.

DETAILED DESCRIPTION OF THE EMBODIMENTS

Hereinafter, preferred embodiments of the present disclosure will be described in detail with reference to the appended drawings. Note that, in this specification and the appended drawings, structural elements that have substantially the same function and structure are denoted with the same reference numerals, and repeated explanation of these structural elements is omitted.

1. Overview of Display Device in Accordance With Embodiment of the Present Disclosure

First, an overview of a display device **100** in accordance with an embodiment of the present disclosure will be described with reference to FIG. 1.

FIG. 1 is an explanatory diagram showing the appearance of the display device **100** in accordance with an embodiment of the present disclosure. Note that in FIG. 1, shutter eyeglasses **200** worn by a user are shown in conjunction with the display device **100**.

As shown in FIG. 1, the display device **100** has an image display unit **111** for displaying images. The display device **100** is capable of allowing a user to perceive a stereoscopic image by displaying an image for the left eye (hereinafter referred to as a left-eye image) and an image for the right eye (hereinafter referred to as a right-eye image) on the image display unit **110**. In addition, this display device **100** also has a function of an audio processing device for controlling audio output of each speaker, which constitutes a speaker system, as detailed in the "2. Configuration of Display Device" section.

The shutter eyeglasses **200** include a right-eye-image transmitting portion **212** and a left-eye-image transmitting portion **214** that are formed of liquid crystal shutters, for example. The shutter eyeglasses **200** execute an operation of opening or closing the right-eye-image transmitting portion **212** and the left-eye-image transmitting portion **214** in response to a signal transmitted from the display device **100**. A user can perceive a left-eye image and a right-eye image, which are displayed on the image display unit **110**, as a stereoscopic image by viewing light emitted from the image display unit **111** through the right-eye-image transmitting portion **212** and the left-eye-image transmitting portion **214** of the shutter eyeglasses **200**.

Meanwhile, when a common 2D image is displayed on the image display unit **110**, a user can perceive an image displayed on the image display unit **110** as a common 2D image by viewing light emitted from the image display unit **110** as it is.

Although the display device **100** is shown as an exemplary audio processing device in FIG. 1, the audio processing device of the present disclosure is not limited thereto. For example, the audio processing device can be an information processing device such as a PC (Personal Computer), a home video processing device (e.g., a DVD recorder or a videocassette recorder), a PDA (Personal Digital Assistant), a home game machine, a portable phone, a portable video processing device, or a portable game machine.

In addition, although this specification describes a control scheme that utilizes a shutter operation to allow a left-eye image and a right-eye image to be perceived by the left eye and the right eye, respectively, the control scheme of the present disclosure is not limited thereto. For example, an equivalent effect can be obtained by using a polarizing filter for the left eye and a polarizing filter for the right eye.

2. Configuration of Display Device

Described above is the overview of the display device **100** in accordance with an embodiment of the present disclosure. Next, the configuration of the display device **100** in accordance with an embodiment of the present disclosure will be described with reference to FIG. 2.

FIG. 2 is a functional block diagram showing the configuration of the display device **100** in accordance with an embodiment of the present disclosure. As shown in FIG. 2, the display device **100** includes an image display unit **110**, a video signal controller **120**, a shutter controller **130**, a timing controller **140**, an infrared emitter **150**, a video analysis unit **160**, an audio controller **170**, and a speaker system **180**.

The image display unit **110** has a configuration for displaying an image as described above, and when an external signal is applied thereto, displays an image corresponding to the

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applied signal. The image display unit **110** includes, as shown in FIG. 2, a display panel **112**, a gate driver **113**, a data driver **114**, and a backlight **115**.

The display panel **112** is configured to display an image in response to an external signal applied thereto. The display panel **112** displays an image as a plurality of scan lines are sequentially scanned. The display panel **112** has a pair of transparent plates made of glass or the like, and liquid crystal molecules, which have a predetermined orientation state, placed between the transparent plates. The method of driving the display panel **112** can be a TN (Twisted Nematic) scheme, a VA (Vertical Alignment) scheme, or an IPS (In-Plane-Switching) scheme. The display panel **112** in accordance with the embodiment of the present disclosure alternately displays right-eye images and left-eye images at predetermined timings in response to external signals applied thereto.

The gate driver **113** is a driver for driving gate bus lines (not shown) of the display panel **112**. The gate driver **113** receives signals transmitted from the timing controller **140**, and outputs signals to the gate bus lines in response to the signals transmitted from the timing controller **140**.

The data driver **114** is a driver for generating signals to be applied to data lines (not shown) of the display panel **112**. The data driver **114** receives signals transmitted from the timing controller **140**, and generates signals to be applied to the data lines in response to the signals transmitted from the timing controller **140**, and then outputs the signals.

The backlight **115** is provided on the deepest portion of the image display unit **110** seen from a user. When an image is displayed on the image display unit **110**, white light, which has not been polarized (unpolarized light), is emitted from the backlight **115** to the display panel **112** located on the user side. For the backlight **115**, either light-emitting diodes or a cold-cathode tube can be used. Although FIG. 2 shows a surface light source as the backlight **115**, the configuration of the light source of the present disclosure is not limited to such example. For example, it is possible to inject light to the display panel **112** by arranging a light source on the peripheral portion of the display panel **112** and diffusing light from the light source using a diffuser plate or the like. Alternatively, instead of using a surface light source, it is also possible to use a point light source and a condenser lens in combination, for example.

The video signal controller **120**, upon receiving a 3D video signal for displaying a left-eye image and a right-eye image, generates a video signal for alternately displaying the left-eye image and the right-eye image on the image display unit **110**. The video signal generated by the video signal controller **120** is transmitted to the timing controller **140**.

The shutter controller **130**, upon receiving a predetermined signal generated in accordance with the signal processing of the video signal controller **120**, generates a shutter control signal for controlling the shutter operation of the shutter eyeglasses **200** in response to the signal. The shutter eyeglasses **200** execute an operation of opening or closing the right-eye-image transmitting portion **212** and the left-eye-image transmitting portion **214** on the basis of the shutter control signal that has been generated by the shutter controller **130** and emitted from the infrared emitter **150**. Specifically, the shutter operation is executed in such a manner that while a left-eye image is displayed on the display panel **112**, the left-eye-image transmitting portion **214** is open, and while a right-eye image is displayed on the display panel **112**, the right-eye-image transmitting portion **212** is open.

The timing controller **140**, in response to the signal transmitted from the video signal controller **120**, generates pulse signals used to operate the gate driver **113** and the data driver

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114. As the timing controller **140** generates pulse signals and the gate driver **113** and the data driver **114** receive the pulse signals generated by the timing controller **140**, an image corresponding to the video signal transmitted from the video signal controller **120** is displayed on the display panel **112**.

The video analysis unit **160** functions as an estimation unit for estimating a user's representative perceived position of a stereoscopic image that is based on the 3D video signal. For the estimation, information such as the 3D video signal, a screen size of the image display unit **110**, and the viewing distance between the user and the image display unit **110** is supplied to the video analysis unit **160**. Information such as the screen size of the image display unit **110** and the viewing distance between the user and the image display unit **110** can be either set on the display device **100**, or be entered via an operation by the user. The method of estimating the representative perceived position will be detailed in the "2-1. Estimation of Representative Perceived Position" section.

The audio controller **170** controls audio output of the speaker system (audio output device) **180** in accordance with the representative perceived position estimated by the video analysis unit **160**. Specifically, the speaker system **180** includes a center speaker C, a front speaker (a front audio output device) L, a front speaker (a front audio output device) R, a rear speaker (rear audio output device) Ls, and a rear speaker (a rear audio output device) Rs, and the audio controller **170** controls audio output of each speaker. The audio control performed by the audio controller **170** will be detailed in the "2-2. Specific Examples of Audio Control" section.

Described above is the configuration of the display device **100** in accordance with an embodiment of the present disclosure. Hereinafter, estimation of the representative perceived position by the video analysis unit **160** and audio control performed by the audio controller **170** will be described in more detail.

2-1. Estimation of Representative Perceived Position

First Example

For estimation of the representative perceived position, the size of a single pixel of the image display unit **110** is used. Thus, if the size of a single pixel is unknown, the video analysis unit **160** calculates the size (pixel_cm) from information on the screen size of the image display unit **110**.

For example, consider a case in which the following values are known as the information on the screen size.

TV_INCH: the size of the image display unit **110** [inch]

TV_WIDTH_PIXEL: the number of pixels in the effective screen (horizontal) [pixel]

TV_HEIGHT_PIXEL: the number of pixels in the effective screen (vertical) [pixel]

In this case, the following values shown in FIG. 3 can be calculated from the information on the screen size.

tv_size_pixel: the size of the effective screen [pixel]

tv_size: the size of the effective screen [cm]

tv_width: the width of the effective screen [cm]

tv_height: the height of the effective screen [cm]

For example, tv_size_pixel and tv_size are calculated in accordance with the following formula.

$$tv_size_pixel = \sqrt{(TV_WIDTH_PIXEL^2 + TV_HEIGHT_PIXEL^2)}$$

$$tv_size = TV_INCH \times 2.54$$

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Further, pixel_cm that is the size of a single pixel is calculated from tv_size_pixel and tv_size in accordance with the following formula.

$$\text{pixel_cm} = \text{tv_size} / \text{tv_size_pixel}$$

Specifically, when TV_INCH is 40 inches, TV_WIDTH_PIXEL is 1920 pixels, and TV_HEIGHT_PIXEL is 1080 pixels, each value is calculated as follows.

$$\text{tv_size_pixel} = 2202.9 \text{ pixels}$$

$$\text{tv_size} = 101.6 \text{ cm}$$

$$\text{pixel_cm} = 0.0461 \text{ cm}$$

The video analysis unit **160**, on the basis of the aforementioned pixel_cm and the difference between the left-eye image and the right-eye image, estimates the user's representative perceived position of the stereoscopic image. That is, the video analysis unit **160** calculates the distance x between the user's representative perceived position of the stereoscopic image and the image display unit **110**. Herein, the representative perceived position can be a position at which a representative image object (portion) in the stereoscopic image is to be viewed by the user. Hereinafter, detection of such image object will be briefly described with reference to FIG. **4**, and then, a method of calculating the distance x will be described with reference to FIG. **5**.

The video analysis unit **160** detects a face image, which is included in a left-eye image and a right-eye image, as an image object using a face detection technology. Consequently, when only a single face image has been detected, the video analysis unit **160** handles the user's perceived position of the face image as the representative perceived position, and calculates the distance x for the face image with a method described below. Meanwhile, when a plurality of face images A to C have been detected as shown in FIG. **4**, the video analysis unit **160** can select one of the face images and calculate the distance x for the selected face image. Alternatively, the video analysis unit **160** can calculate the distances x(A) to x(C) for the respective face images A to C, and calculate the mean value of the distances x(A) to x(C) as the distance x.

FIG. **5** is an explanatory diagram showing the relationship between the position at which image objects, which are included in a left-eye image and a right-eye image, are displayed and the position at which a stereoscopic image is perceived. As shown in FIG. **5**, the video analysis unit **160** converts LR_DIFF_PIXEL (pixel), which is the difference in the horizontal display position between an image object included in the left-eye image and an image object included in the right-eye image, into the value of a cm unit using the aforementioned pixel_cm (see the formula below).

$$\text{lr_diff} = \text{LR_DIFF_PIXEL} \times \text{pixel_cm}$$

Herein, if the distance D (cm) between the image display unit **110** and the user and the distance E (cm) between the eyes of the user are known, the video analysis unit **160** can calculate the distance x (cm) from the image display unit **110** to the user's perceived position of the image object in accordance with the following formula.

$$x = \text{lr_diff} \times D / (E + \text{lr_diff})$$

As a specific example, when LR_DIFF_PIXEL is 10 pixels, pixel_cm is 0.0461 cm, the distance D is 250 cm, and the distance E is 6 cm, the values of lr_diff and the distance x are as follows. Note that if the user's perceived position of the

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image object is located on the rear side of the image display unit **110**, the distance x has a negative value.

$$\text{lr_diff} = 0.4612 \text{ cm}$$

$$x = 17.845 \text{ cm}$$

Second Example

Although the first example has illustrated an example in which the representative perceived position is the user's perceived position of a representative image object (portion) in a stereoscopic image, the representative perceived position of the present disclosure is not limited thereto. For example, as described below, the representative perceived position can be a position that is considered to be dominant among the user's perceived positions of regions that make up a stereoscopic image.

In order to estimate such a representative perceived position, in the second example, a plurality of regions are defined by dividing a left-eye image and a right-eye image, and the distance between the user's perceived position of each region and the image display unit **110** is estimated, so that the distance x is calculated on the basis of the distribution of the distances estimated for the respective regions. Detailed description will be given below with reference to FIGS. **6** and **7**.

FIG. **6** is an explanatory diagram showing an example of image division. As shown in FIG. **6**, the video analysis unit **160** defines areas 0 to N for a left-eye image and a right-eye image. The shape and the size of each area are not particularly limited, and each area can include, for example, 10×10 pixels.

Then, the video analysis unit **160** calculates, for each area, the distance x_m (0 ≤ m ≤ N) between the user's perceived position of the image in the area and the image display unit **110**, in accordance with the method described in the first example. For example, when the number of the areas is 10, the video analysis unit **160** calculates the distances x₀ to x₉ for the respective areas 0 to 9 as shown in FIG. **7**.

Further, the video analysis unit **160** identifies the distance x on the basis of the distribution of the distances x_m calculated for the respective areas. For example, the video analysis unit **160** can handle as the distance x the most frequent value among the distances x_m calculated for the respective areas. According to such a method, 4 cm, which is the most frequent value among the distances x₀ to x₉ calculated for the respective areas, is handled as the distance x in the example shown in FIG. **7**.

Alternatively, the video analysis unit **160** can calculate, for every predetermined value range, the number of the distances x_m included in the value range, and identify the distance x on the basis of the value range that includes the maximum number of the distances x_m. For example, when the number of the distances x_m (areas) corresponding to the value range of every five cm (e.g., 0 to 5 cm, 5 to 10 cm . . .) is calculated, the number of the distances x_m included in the value range of 20 to 25 cm is the maximum in the example shown in FIG. **7**. In such a case, 20 cm, which is the minimum value of the value range can be handled as the distance x, or the mean value of the distances x_m included in the value range can be handled as the distance x.

2-2. Specific Examples of Audio Control

The audio controller **170** controls audio output of the speaker system **180** on the basis of the distance x obtained by the video analysis unit **160** as described above. Audio output

control performed by the audio controller 170 will be described specifically with reference to FIGS. 8 to 13.
(When $x=0$)

When the distance x obtained by the video analysis unit 160 is "0," that is, when the user's perceived position P of a stereoscopic image coincides with the position at which the image display unit 110 is arranged (which is an exemplary reference plane), the audio controller 170 controls an audio signal for each speaker to be output from the corresponding speaker as it is.

Specifically, as shown in FIG. 8, the audio controller 170 supplies an audio signal $C1$ for the center speaker C to the center speaker C , supplies an audio signal $L1$ for the front speaker L to the front speaker L , and supplies an audio signal $R1$ for the front speaker R to the front speaker R . Likewise, the audio controller 170 supplies an audio signal $L2$ for the rear speaker Ls to the rear speaker Ls , and supplies an audio signal $R2$ for the rear speaker Rs to the rear speaker Rs .
(When $x>0$)

Described next with reference to FIG. 9 is audio control performed by the audio controller 170 when the distance x obtained by the video analysis unit 160 is greater than "0," that is, when the user's perceived position P of a stereoscopic image is closer to the user than is the image display unit 110.

FIG. 9 is an explanatory diagram illustrating audio control performed by the audio controller 170 when the user's perceived position P of a stereoscopic image is closer to the user than is the image display unit 110. In this case, the audio controller 170 supplies the audio signal $L1$, which is originally intended for the front speaker L , to the front speaker L and the rear speaker Ls at a volume ratio in accordance with the distance x . More specifically, as the distance x is longer, the audio controller 170 supplies the audio signal $L1$ to the rear speaker Ls at a higher rate.

Likewise, the audio controller 170 supplies the audio signal $R1$, which is originally intended for the front speaker R , to the front speaker R and the rear speaker Rs at a volume ratio in accordance with the distance x . More specifically, as the distance x is longer, the audio controller 170 supplies the audio signal $R1$ to the rear speaker Rs at a higher rate.

In addition, as the distance x is longer, the audio controller 170 reduces the audio signal $L2$ that is originally intended for the rear speaker Ls and is actually supplied to the rear speaker Ls , and also reduces the audio signal $R2$ that is originally intended for the rear speaker Rs and is actually supplied to the rear speaker Rs .

For example, the audio controller 170 can supply $C1'$, $L1'$, $R1'$, $L2'$, and $R2'$, which are represented by the following formulae, to the center speaker C , the front speaker L , the front speaker R , the rear speaker Ls , and the rear speaker Rs , respectively. Note that $C1$, $L1$, $R1$, $L2$, and $R2$ in the following formulae are the audio signals that are originally intended for the corresponding speakers.

$$C1'=(1-x/D)C1$$

$$L1'=(1-x/D)L1$$

$$R1'=(1-x/D)R1$$

$$L2'=(1-x/D)L2+(x/D)L1+(1-x/D)C^{1/2}$$

$$R2'=(1-x/D)R2+(x/D)R1+(1-x/D)C^{1/2}$$

(When $x=D$)

When the distance x obtained by the video analysis unit 160 is equal to the viewing distance D of the user as shown in

FIG. 10, the audio controller 170 supplies $C1'$, $L1'$, $R1'$, $L2'$, and $R2'$ represented by the following formulae to the corresponding speakers.

$$C1'=0$$

$$L1'=0$$

$$R1'=0$$

$$L2'=L1+C^{1/2}$$

$$R2'=R1+C^{1/2}$$

(When $-D< x < 0$)

Described next is audio control performed when the distance x obtained by the video analysis unit 160 satisfies " $-D< x < 0$," that is, when the image display unit 110 is closer to the user than is the user's perceived position P of a stereoscopic image, and the absolute value of x is less than D .

FIG. 11 is an explanatory diagram showing audio control performed by the audio controller 170 when the image display unit 110 is closer to the user than is the user's perceived position P of a stereoscopic image. In this case, the audio controller 170 supplies the audio signal $L2$, which is originally intended for the rear speaker Ls , to the front speaker L and the rear speaker Ls at a volume ratio in accordance with the distance x . More specifically, as the absolute value of the distance x is greater, the audio controller 170 supplies the audio signal $L2$ to the front speaker L at a higher rate.

Likewise, the audio controller 170 supplies the audio signal $R2$, which is originally intended for the rear speaker Rs , to the front speaker R and the rear speaker Rs at a volume ratio in accordance with the distance x . More specifically, as the absolute value of the distance x is greater, the audio controller 170 supplies the audio signal $R2$ to the front speaker R at a higher rate.

In addition, as the absolute value of the distance x is greater, the audio controller 170 reduces the audio signal $L1$ supplied to the front speaker L , and also reduces the audio signal $R1$ supplied to the front speaker R .

For example, the audio controller 170 can supply $C1'$, $L1'$, $R1'$, $L2'$, and $R2'$, which are represented by the following formulae, to the center speaker C , the front speaker L , the front speaker R , the rear speaker Ls , and the rear speaker Rs , respectively.

$$C1'=(1-|x|/D)C1$$

$$L1'=(1-|x|/D)L1+(|x|/D)L2$$

$$R1'=(1-|x|/D)R1+(|x|/D)R2$$

$$L2'=(1-|x|/D)L2$$

$$R2'=(1-|x|/D)R2$$

(When $-D=x$)

When the absolute value of the distance x obtained by the video analysis unit 160 is equal to the viewing distance D of the user as shown in FIG. 12, the audio controller 170 supplies $C1'$, $L1'$, $R1'$, $L2'$, and $R2'$, which are represented by the following formulae, to the corresponding speakers.

$$C1'=0$$

$$L1'=L2$$

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$$R1'=R2$$

$$L2'=0$$

$$R2'=0$$

(When $x \leftarrow D$)

Described next is audio control performed when the distance x obtained by the video analysis unit **160** satisfies " $x \leftarrow D$," that is, when the image display unit **110** is closer to the user than is the user's perceived position P of a stereoscopic image, and the absolute value of x is greater than D .

FIG. **13** is an explanatory diagram showing audio control performed by the audio controller **170** when the image display unit **110** is closer to the user than is the user's perceived position P of a stereoscopic image. In this case, the audio controller **170** supplies the audio signal $L2$, which is originally intended for the rear speaker Ls , to the front speaker L with a magnitude in accordance with the distance x . More specifically, as the absolute value of the distance x is greater, the audio controller **170** reduces the audio signal $L2$ supplied to the front speaker L .

Likewise, the audio controller **170** supplies the audio signal $R2$, which is originally intended for the rear speaker Rs , to the front speaker R with a magnitude in accordance with the distance x . More specifically, as the absolute value of the distance x is greater, the audio controller **170** reduces the audio signal $R2$ supplied to the front speaker R .

For example, the audio controller **170** can supply $C1'$, $L1'$, $R1'$, $L2'$, and $R2'$, which are represented by the following formulae, to the center speaker C , the front speaker L , the front speaker R , the rear speaker Ls , and the rear speaker Rs , respectively.

$$C1'=0$$

$$L1'=(D/|x|)R2$$

$$R1'=(D/|x|)R2$$

$$L2'=0$$

$$R2'=0$$

As described above, the display device **100** in accordance with an embodiment of the present disclosure can control audio output of each speaker in accordance with the user's representative perceived position of a stereoscopic image that is based on a left-eye image and a right-eye image.

3. Operation of Display Device

Next, the operation of the display device **100** in accordance with an embodiment of the present disclosure will be briefly described with reference to FIG. **14**.

FIG. **14** is a flowchart showing the operation of the display device **100** in accordance with an embodiment of the present disclosure. First, as shown in FIG. **14**, the video analysis unit **160** of the display device **100** acquires information such as a screen size of the display device **100** and the viewing distance of the user (S210). Then, the video analysis unit **160** acquires the difference between a left-eye image and a right-eye image on the basis of an input 3D video signal (S220).

Then, the video analysis unit **160**, on the basis of the information acquired in S210 and the difference between the left-eye image and the right-eye image, estimates the user's representative perceived position of a stereoscopic image (S230). That is, the video analysis unit **160** calculates the distance x between the user's representative perceived position of the stereoscopic image and the image display unit **110**.

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Note that the distance x can be calculated with a variety of methods as described in the "2-1. Estimation of Representative Perceived Position" section. Thereafter, the audio controller **170** controls audio output of each speaker that constitutes the speaker system **180** in accordance with the distance x calculated by the video analysis unit **160** (S240).

4. Conclusion

As described above, the display device **100** in accordance with the embodiment of the present disclosure can control audio output of each speaker in accordance with the user's representative perceived position of a stereoscopic image that is based on a left-eye image and a right-eye image. Consequently, the linkage between a 3D image, which is composed of a left-eye image and a right-eye image, and an audio signal can be emphasized more.

For example, when content such as Kabuki (a classical Japanese dance-drama) or a drama is to be reproduced, and the user's perceived position of a stage is estimated to be the rear side of the image display unit **110**, the display device **100** controls audio signals, which are originally intended for the rear speakers, to be output from the front speakers. According to such a configuration, the user can more strongly feel that he is viewing the whole stage from a far place. In addition, when content such as orchestra performance is to be reproduced and the user's perceived position of the orchestra is estimated to be closer to the user than is the image display unit **110**, the display device **100** controls audio signals, which are originally intended for the front speakers, to be output from the rear speakers. According to such a configuration, the user can more strongly feel a sense of realism so that he feels as if he is among the members of the orchestra at the orchestra site.

Although the preferred embodiments of the present disclosure have been described in detail with reference to the appended drawings, the present disclosure is not limited thereto. It is obvious to those skilled in the art that various modifications or variations are possible insofar as they are within the technical scope of the appended claims or the equivalents thereof. It should be understood that such modifications or variations are also within the technical scope of the present disclosure.

For example, although the aforementioned embodiments have illustrated an example in which a representative image object in a stereoscopic image is detected using the face detection technology, the present disclosure is not limited to thereto. Other than a face image, an object with a motion is considered to be a representative image object. Thus, the display device **100** can, for example, perform the following process to detect an object with a motion as a representative image object in a stereoscopic image.

(Step 1)

The display device **100**, on the basis of each frame, detects a motion of an imaging device of when each frame was imaged. The motion of the imaging device includes a movement of the position of the imaging device, a change in the imaging direction of the imaging device, and the like. The motion of the imaging device can be detected on the basis of, for example, the difference between two consecutive frames. More specifically, the display device **100**, for each block that makes up a frame $L-1$, predicts a motion in a frame L , and thus obtains a motion vector of each block. Then, the display device **100** removes motion vectors, which greatly differ from the dominant direction, from the motion vectors of all the blocks, to thereby detect a motion vector of the imaging device from the remaining motion vectors.

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(Step 2)

The display device **100** converts the frame L-1 so that the motion vector of the imaging device detected in Step 1 is canceled. For example, when the direction of the motion vector of the imaging device detected in Step 1 is Q and the size thereof is R, an image within the frame L-1 is moved in the -Q direction by a size of R.

(Step 3)

The display device **100** generates a differential image between the frame L and the frame L-1 after the conversion in Step 2. Herein, the position of even a still object would differ in the frame L and the frame L-1 due to a motion of the imaging device. However, as the motion of the imaging device has been cancelled in the frame L-1 after the conversion as described above, it is considered that the position at which a still object is located is almost the same in the frame L and the frame L-1 after the conversion. Therefore, mainly an object with a motion appears as the difference in the differential image between the frame L and the frame L-1 after the conversion.

(Step 4)

The display device **100** detects an object with a motion from the differential image generated in Step 3. As the display device **100** can detect an object with a motion as a representative image object in a stereoscopic image as described above, it is possible to calculate the user's perceived position of the object with a motion as the user's representative perceived position. According to such a configuration, the display device **100** can detect, for example, a racing car in a stereoscopic image of a circuit as an object with a motion, and perform audio control in accordance with the user's perceived position of the racing car.

Alternatively, the display device **100** can detect an object, which has been imaged by tracking with an imaging device, (an object imaged by chasing) as a representative image object in a stereoscopic image, and perform audio control in accordance with the user's perceived position of the object. Described below is an exemplary method for detecting an object that has been imaged by tracking with an imaging device.

(Step 1)

The display device **100**, on the basis of each frame, detects a motion of an imaging device of when each frame was imaged.

(Step 2)

The display device **100** determines a section in which the amount of the motion of the imaging device, which has been detected in Step 1, is above a threshold to be a section in which the imaging device was moving.

(Step 3)

The display device **100** detects an object, which is detected in a section that is longer than a predetermined length, within the section in which the imaging device was moving, to be an object that has been imaged by tracking.

Although the description has been made above of an example in which the volume of an audio signal output of each speaker is controlled as a control of audio output of each speaker, the present disclosure is not limited thereto. For example, the technical scope of the present disclosure includes, instead of the volume control, or in addition to the volume control, controlling the phase of an audio signal output of each speaker.

In addition, the steps of the process performed by the display device **100** in this specification need not be performed chronologically in accordance with the order described in the flowchart. For example, the steps of the process performed by the display device **100** can be either performed in an order that

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differs from the order described in the flowchart or be performed in parallel. In addition, it is also possible to create a computer program for causing hardware such as a CPU, ROM, or RAM built in the display device **100** to exert a function that is equivalent to the function of each unit of the aforementioned display device **100**. Further, there is also provided a storage medium having the computer program stored therein.

What is claimed is:

1. An audio processing device comprising:

an estimation unit configured to:

divide a left-eye image and a right-eye image of a stereoscopic image to be displayed on a display device into a plurality of regions;

estimate a representative perceived position of the stereoscopic image with respect to a user based on one or more perceived positions of each of the plurality of regions and a pixel size of the display device, wherein the one or more perceived positions are calculated based on a difference between the left-eye image and the right-eye image of the stereoscopic image; and

an audio controller configured to control audio output of an audio output device in accordance with the representative perceived position.

2. The audio processing device according to claim 1, wherein the audio output device comprises a front audio output device and a rear audio output device, the rear audio output device being arranged at a position that is farther from the display device than the front audio output device, and the audio controller controls the audio output of the front audio output device and the rear audio output device in accordance with a distance between the representative perceived position and a reference plane.

3. The audio processing device according to claim 2, wherein, when the representative perceived position coincides with the reference plane, the audio controller supplies a first audio signal to the front audio output device, and supplies a second audio signal to the rear audio output device.

4. The audio processing device according to claim 3, wherein, when the representative perceived position is closer to the user than the reference plane, the audio controller supplies the first audio signal to the front audio output device and the rear audio output device at a ratio in accordance with a distance between the representative perceived position and the reference plane.

5. The audio processing device according to claim 4, wherein the audio controller, supplies the first audio signal to the rear audio output device at a rate corresponding to the distance between the representative perceived position and the reference plane.

6. The audio processing device according to claim 5, wherein the audio controller, reduces the second audio signal supplied to the rear audio output device at a rate corresponding to the distance between the representative perceived position and the reference plane.

7. The audio processing device according to claim 3, wherein, when the reference plane is closer to the user than the representative perceived position, the audio controller supplies the second audio signal to the front audio output device and the rear audio output device at a ratio in accordance with the distance between the representative perceived position and the reference plane.

8. The audio processing device according to claim 7, wherein the audio controller supplies the second audio signal to the front audio output device at a rate corresponding to the distance between the representative perceived position and the reference plane.

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9. The audio processing device according to claim 8, wherein the audio controller reduces the first audio signal supplied to the front audio output device at a rate corresponding to the distance between the representative perceived position and the reference plane.

10. The audio processing device according to claim 1, wherein the estimation unit estimates a perceived position of each of a plurality of face images, and estimates the representative perceived position based on the perceived position of each of the plurality of face images.

11. The audio processing device according to claim 10, wherein the estimation unit estimates, as the representative perceived position, one of the perceived positions of the plurality of face images.

12. The audio processing device according to claim 10, wherein the estimation unit estimates, as the representative perceived position, a mean value of the perceived positions of the plurality of face images.

13. The audio processing device according to claim 1, wherein the estimation unit estimates the representative perceived position based on a distribution of the one or more perceived positions of the plurality of regions.

14. The audio processing device according to claim 1, wherein the estimation unit is configured to detect a plurality of face images in the left-eye image and the right-eye image.

15. The audio processing device according to claim 14, wherein the estimation unit estimates a perceived position of each of the plurality of face images, and estimates the representative perceived position based on the perceived position of each of the plurality of face images.

16. The audio processing device according to claim 1, wherein the one or more perceived positions are calculated from the difference in horizontal display positions between an image object included in the left-eye image and an image object included in the right-eye image.

17. The audio processing device according to claim 1, wherein the estimation unit estimates distances between the one or more perceived positions of the plurality of regions and the display device.

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18. The audio processing device according to claim 1, wherein the estimation unit calculates a distance based on a distribution of distances estimated for the plurality of regions, and wherein the audio controller controls the audio output of the audio output device based on the calculated distance.

19. An audio processing method comprising:

dividing a left-eye image and a right-eye image of a stereoscopic image to be displayed on a display device into a plurality of regions;

estimating a representative perceived position of the stereoscopic image with respect to a user based on one or more perceived positions of each of the plurality of regions and a pixel size of the display device, wherein the one or more perceived positions are calculated based on a difference between the left-eye image and the right-eye image of the stereoscopic image; and

controlling audio output of an audio output device in accordance with the representative perceived position.

20. A non-transitory computer-readable storage medium having stored thereon, a computer program having at least one code section for communication, the at least one code section being executable by a computer for causing the computer to perform steps comprising:

dividing a left-eye image and a right-eye image of a stereoscopic image to be displayed on a display device into a plurality of regions;

estimating a representative perceived position of the stereoscopic image with respect to a user based on one or more perceived positions of each of the plurality of regions and a pixel size of the display device, wherein the one or more perceived positions are calculated based on a difference between the left-eye image and the right-eye image of the stereoscopic image; and

controlling audio output of an audio output device in accordance with the representative perceived position.

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